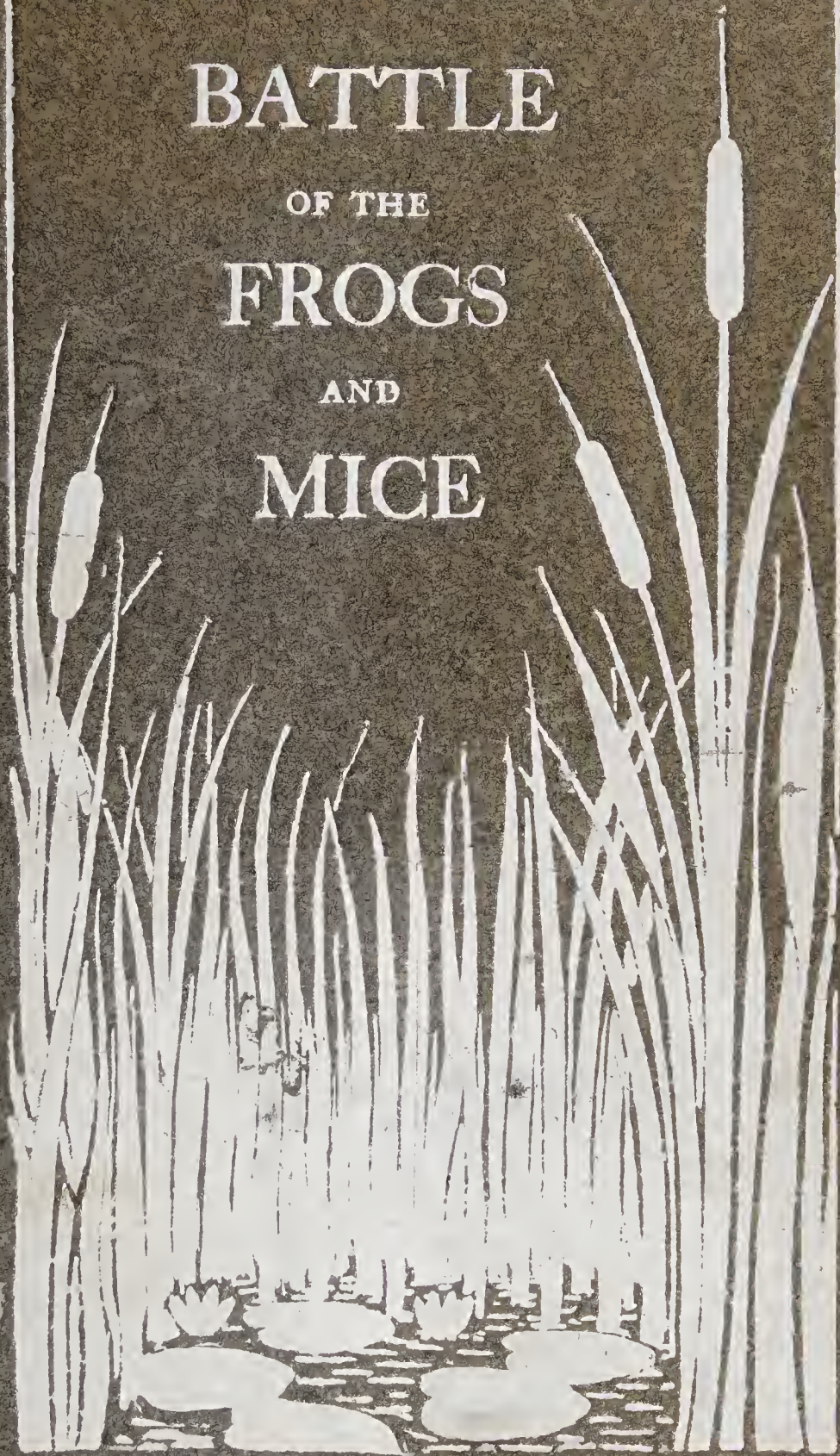


HOMER'S
BATTLE
OF THE
FROGS
AND
MICE



Anno 1778

PHILLIPS ACADEMY

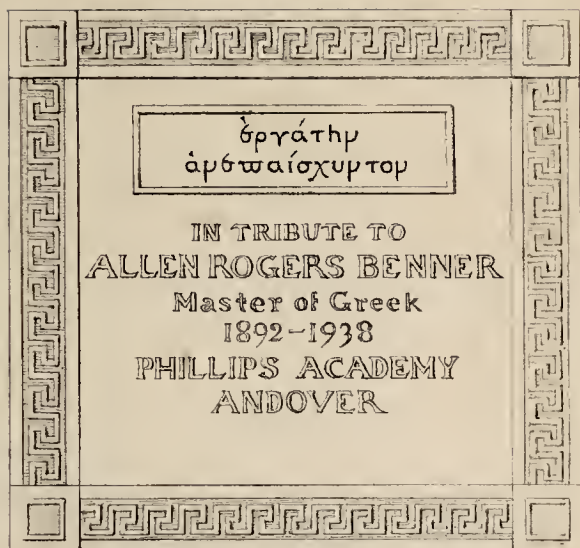


OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES
LIBRARY



THIS BOOK IS FROM
THE LIBRARY OF
ALLEN ROGERS BENNER
Class of 1888
Teacher of Greek at
Phillips Academy
1892-1938

Allen Rogers Benner
bought from Small & Stansbury
Seaworth & Co. for Mrs. Tingley's library





Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2019 with funding from
Kahle/Austin Foundation

<https://archive.org/details/homersbattleoffr0000home>

BATTLE OF THE FROGS AND MICE

Homerus

HOMER'S BATTLE OF THE FROGS AND MICE

ARRANGED FOR YOUNG PEOPLE BY

OSCAR HERRMANN

AUTHOR OF "PIRATES AND PIRACY"

ILLUSTRATED BY

FREDERICK EHRLICH

NEW YORK

EVERITT & FRANCIS CO.

1903

L
66255

COPYRIGHT 1903
BY OSCAR HERRMANN

883
H7b

PREFACE

The object of the Editor, in placing this book before the public, is to familiarize young readers with the writings of the greatest of all classic poets, and one whose work, although he has been dead nearly 3000 years, is still the fountain from which many of the greatest of modern writers get their inspiration. The Iliad and the Odyssey have both been edited for the young; but the present volume is the first attempt to bring into prominence, for juveniles, a humorous work by this illustrious poet. The translation is a very free one, for although I have kept strictly to the style of the original, I have tried to simplify many of the passages. I take this opportunity of acknowledging the kind assistance I have received from Mr. W. H. Lee in preparing this book.

OSCAR HERRMANN

New York, January, 1903.

INTRODUCTION.

Homer's poem, *The Battle of the Frogs and Mice*, is a parody on parts of his great Epic, *The Iliad*. It is Homer's only humorous writing, and it is to be regretted the great bard left but this one example of his pointed and scintillating wit. Strange to say, it was the first of the Homeric poems to be printed, on the revival of Letters, about 1486 A. D., when printing came into general use.

The story, briefly, is: A mouse, "Crumb-Pilfer," escaping from a weasel, stopped at a lake to drink. A frog, "Quick-Leaper," seeing him, entered into a conversation, persuading the mouse to take a trip on the frog's back across the lake. A water snake suddenly frightened him and, sinking to the bottom, the unfortunate mouse was left to his fate and miserably perished. Crumb-Pilfer, while dying, appealed to all the mice for vengeance. When the news of his death was brought to his father, the bereaved parent persuaded the mice to take arms and visit punishment upon the deceiving frogs. The frogs, observing these warlike preparations, left the water and took up a strong position, both offensive and defensive, on the bank. Meantime, at a council held among the gods, it was resolved not to interfere, but to watch the contest from the clouds. The battle began, and great valor was displayed by both combatants. The struggle waged fiercely, with alternate success and repulses, when by a clever coup the frogs were almost exterminated. Jupiter, seeing this, hurled a thunderbolt amongst them, hoping thus to

stop the battle. The mice, however, paying no attention to the evidence of the will of Jupiter, continued to slaughter the retreating foe. Jupiter, enraged, sent an army of crabs to the aid of the frogs, which soon achieved great success, and remained victors on the battlefield.

Such, then, was Homer's story. If we can carry ourselves back three thousand years, when the world was still struggling in its chrysalis-shell, we can perhaps faintly realize the powerful effect of this giant mind in the dormant world. Herodotus tells us the life story of this wonderful intellect.

Melesigenes (Homer) was the earliest of the Greek poets, and to him the most beautiful epic poems are credited. He was born about the year 1012 B. C., at Smyrna in Asiatic Greece. His mother, Critheis, daughter of Menapolus, of Magnesia (now Mause), lived in great poverty, eking out a miserable existence for herself and son by hard manual labor, and frequently was dependent upon the charity of her neighbors.

Phemius, a teacher of literature and music, which in this sense means mental culture generally, being unmarried, engaged Critheis as his housekeeper, and attracted by her noble character and charming traits, soon wooed and won her, and adopted the little lad, in whom he discerned the latent power of genius.

Melesigenes applied himself to his studies with great zeal, and in a comparatively short time was able to assist Phemius in his studies, and soon after Phemius died, leaving the modest fortune he had accumulated and his school to his adopted son. Critheis did not survive

her husband long, thus leaving her son an orphan dependent upon his own resources. He, however, continued the school, displaying remarkably versatile talents, and soon the reputation of his school became universal, and attracted the patricians of Smyrna and many of the traders from foreign shores who came to profit by his teachings. Among these traders was one named Mentès, from the Island of Lewcadia, a man of great wealth and owner of a large galley.

Mentès recognizing Melesigenes' ability, invited the young preceptor to accompany him on his travels to foreign lands without any expense. Melesigenes gratefully accepted this offer. After visiting Tyrrhenia and Iberia, the Island of Ithaca suddenly loomed before them. Here Melesigenes, suffering from an ophthalmic disease, was compelled to remain behind, while Mentès reluctantly departed, leaving his companion in the care of a friend, Mentor, and promising to resume the interrupted journeys upon his return.

Mentor was rich, and above all, noble-hearted, and devotedly applied himself to make Melesigenes' stay a pleasant one. It was at this time that Melesigenes collected the data for his wonderful story, the Odyssey, or the adventures of Ulysses after the Trojan war. On Mentès' return to Ithaca the interrupted travels were resumed. They touched at many points in the Archipelago and on the mainland, and at length came to Colophon, about nine miles from the Ionian City of Ephesus. Here Melesigenes had another attack of the disease of the eyes, and he became blind. This

compelled him to return to his home in Smyrna, where he continued his study in poetry and harmonics. A short time after his return, owing to the depleted state of his finances, he left Smyrna for Cumae, the birth-place of his mother, thinking to retrieve his fortunes there. Crossing the Hermaean plain he arrived at Neontichous, an outlying colony of Cumae. Stopping in front of an armorer's shop he recited some of his verses. The armorer's interest was aroused, and enchanted by the melodious voice and eloquent words of the blind man, he bade him enter the shop and continue the recitation of the poem there. Melesigenes entered, seated himself and began his Hymn to the Gods. The declamation so impressed Tychius, the armorer, that he invited the poet to share his home with him. Melesigenes, however, only stayed in Neon-teichos a short time, as the income from his poems was very small, and he continued his journey to Cumae. On arriving there he proceeded to the Assembly, which was then in session, and receiving permission to address the people, recited some of his poems, and proposed, if the City would support him, to make it famous through his verses. In the debate which followed this startling proposition, one of the elders said, "If we were to feed and shelter Homers' (signifying arranger or collector) we would be burdened with many useless people." These words checked and changed the growing sentiment of the representatives, and the offer was rejected. From this time on the appellation Homer clung to him.

He at once departed from Cumae, cursing the unfriendly city, and made his way to Phocaea, where he met Thestorides, a teacher of literature,

who, thinking he could profit by Homer's genius, offered him a home if in return Homer would permit him to transcribe his verses. The blind poet gladly accepted this offer. During his sojourn here he composed the little Iliad and the Phocaeid, but the latter was not, however, saved to the world. Thestorides, having collected many of Homer's poems, left Phocaea, and going to the City of Chios founded a school, recited the verses and proclaimed himself the author. When Homer learned of this plagiarism he decided to go to Chios also and there expose the impostor. While on his way he met a goat-herd, Glaucum, who sheltered him for a while, and pitying him led him to the house of his master in the city of Bolissus. This man being favorably impressed with Homer, offered him the position of instructor to his children, and weakened from hardships endured in traveling in his helpless condition, Homer accepted. While in this citizen's house he composed the Celcopia, and Herodotus claims that he wrote his *Batrachomyomachia*, or *The Battle of the Frogs and Mice* (*) and numerous other poems during the same period. He at length left Bolissus for Chios, and when Thestorides heard of his approach, he left the city, fearing to meet the man he had so shamefully wronged.

Homer, after proving his authorship of the works which had made such a profound reputation for Thestorides, established a school in Chios, with immediate and splendid success, acquired a fortune, and subsequently married. His poems had by now made him celebrated through all Ionia,

(*) It would seem that while employed in teaching these children, Homer told them for their amusement the story of *The Battle of the Frogs and Mice*, basing it on parts of the Iliad.—Editor.

and his reputation quickly spread throughout the whole of Greece. Many of his admirers suggested a visit to Athens, and as this accorded with his desires, he undertook the journey, leaving the isle of Chios in the Fall; his first stop was at Samos, where he passed the Winter. The following Spring he sailed for Athens with some of his Samian friends, but adverse winds drove them for shelter to the island of Ios (now Nio), where they anchored in a sheltered harbor.

Homer, suffering from an internal malady, was carried on shore, where he received honors from the leading citizens of the town. It was destined that he should never reach Athens, and he died at Ios, never recovering from his affliction. He was buried near the shore, and in later years, when his poems became famous, a monument was erected over his grave, with this inscription :

“The earth here covers the head of divine Homer, whose poetry has immortalized heroes.”



CONTENTS

Preface - - - - -

Introduction- - - - -

Battle of the Frogs and Mice

Glossary - - - - -

Finis - - - - -

BATTLE OF THE FROGS AND MICE

BATTLE OF THE FROGS AND MICE.



Once upon a time a mouse having run a great distance to escape the teeth of a blood-thirsty weasel, came to the banks of a beautiful lake and climbed to the top of a large rock to look for his pursuer. Finding himself safe, he sat down to rest.

The sun poured his hot rays upon the head of the tired mouse, causing profuse perspiration and creating a great thirst. Having rested, he descended from his coign of vantage to the edge of the pellucid lake, and dipping into the cool water refreshed himself with an invigorating drink. While thus engaged he was seen by a loquacious frog, indulging himself in the lake, who addressed him thus:



“Stranger, who art thou? Whence camest thou, and who are thy parents? ^(*1) Speak all these things truly lest I catch thee telling falsehoods. For if I find thee to be a proper friend



I will lead thee to my home and will give thee gifts both numerous and good. Now, I am King Quick-Leaper, ruler of all the frogs throughout this marsh. My father's name is Bamby and my mother's Lily-Queen. As for thee, I



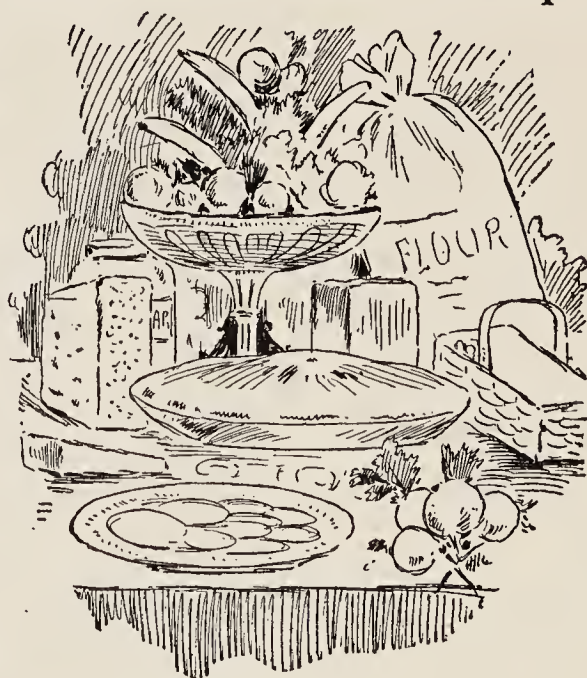
perceive that thou art handsome and brave far above all other mice, a sceptre-wielding king and a bold warrior. Come quickly, tell me of yourself.”

* Where small numbers appear see Glossary.



But him the mouse answered thus:

“Why askest thou concerning my race, which is known to all, both men and gods and birds of the sky? I am high-born Crum-Pilfer, and my father is the noble, long-whiskered Bread-Waster, and mother is Steal-Meal, the beautiful daughter of King Scent-Bacon. I was born in a hut and reared on figs and nuts and all kinds of good things. But how canst thou make me a friend, who am in no way like thee in nature? For thy home is in the water, while I live in the houses of men. Nor does the sweet brown loaf escape my teeth in the well-filled basket, nor the large flat cake having plenty of currants, nor the slices of ham, nor white vested tripe, nor cheese newly pressed from the milk, nor nice honey cake, which even the gods long



for. Nor, in short, any of the delicious things which the cooks prepare for the feasts of men. Never have I fled from the cry of war, but going straight forward to the battle I fought in the foremost rank. I fear



not man though he be a giant in size, but going to his bed I nibble the tip of his finger and catch him by the heel; no pain attacks him nor does he awake when I bite. But there are three things which I dread very much: the owl, the weasel, and the death-dealing trap. But above all I dread the weasel,



which even drives me out of my hole. I do not eat radishes nor cabbages, nor gourds, nor do I feed upon garlic and fresh beets, for these are the foods of ye who dwell in the marsh."



To this Quick-Leaper, smiling, answered thus:

“O Stranger, thou talkest too much of food. Among us also, both in the marsh and on the land, there are many wonders to behold. For unto us the great Jupiter hath granted two modes of living, both on the land and in the waters. But if thou art willing to learn this double life, it is easy. Get on my back and hold fast else thou wilt slip off and drown, so that I may carry thee safely to my home.”

Thus spake the frog, and with a nimble leap Crumb-Pilfer mounted to a secure seat on the broad back and put his arms around Quick-Leaper's smooth neck, and thus they started on their journey. Now this was the first time Crumb-Pilfer



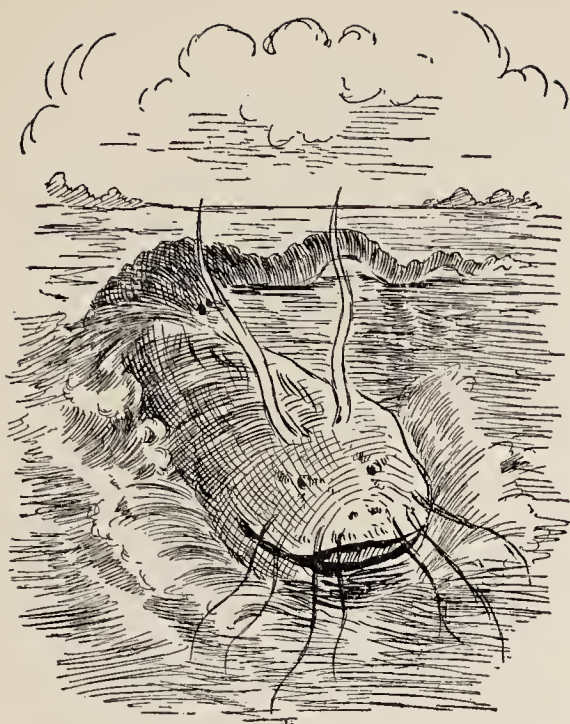
ever rode on the water, and he rejoiced when he beheld the harbors nearby and keenly enjoyed the even motion of his carrier. But when they reached the middle of the lake the smooth surface was disturbed by the wind, and the waves washed



completely over the top of Crumb-Pilfer's strange boat, drenching him with the foaming waters. And weeping much, he repented his rashness, and pulling out his long whiskers in desperation, he drew himself together, his noble heart beating loudly with fear.



He groaned despairingly, and wished himself upon the land once more; but it was too late. Suddenly a horrible water serpent appeared, raising his neck above the water and making directly towards them, with his jaws wide open and fangs quivering ready



to seize them. Quick-Leaper, seeing his mortal enemy so near, was filled with great fear, and, unmindful of the charge upon his back, sank to the bottom of the marsh, leaving Crumb-Pilfer to his own resources. The poor mouse, deserted by his

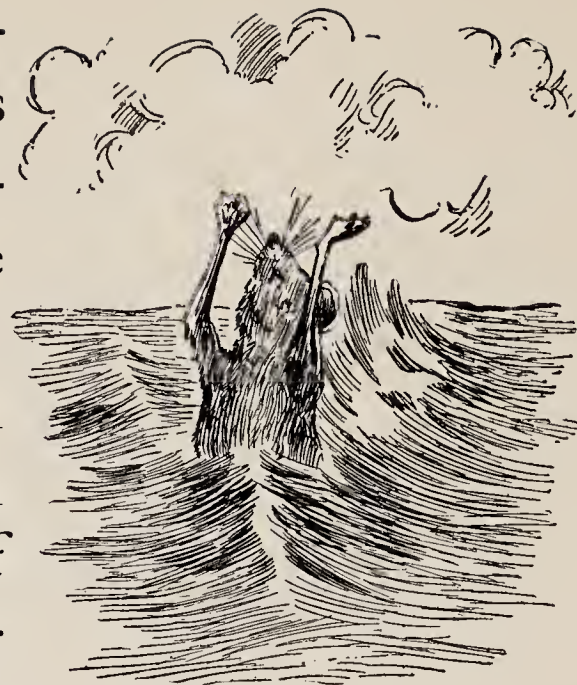
false friend, turned on his back on the water and was seized with cramps, groaning mournfully in pain. Often he sank and rose again, kicking about; and stretching his beautiful tail about the waters, using it like an oar, he prayed to Jupiter that he might be saved from a watery grave. But it was not to be. His wet hair increased his weight, and sinking for the last time he exclaimed:

“Thou shalt not escape, O Quick-Leaper, for having deceived me



by casting me treacherously from thy back as from a rock, after promising me safety. On the dry land, O ignoble one, thou wast not my equal in the swift race, nor in wrestling, nor in feats of strength. But having misled me, thou hast cast

me into the water. Jupiter will avenge this crime by sending a just punishment upon thee through the agency of the mice, who will be revenged." Having thus spoken, he breathed his last.



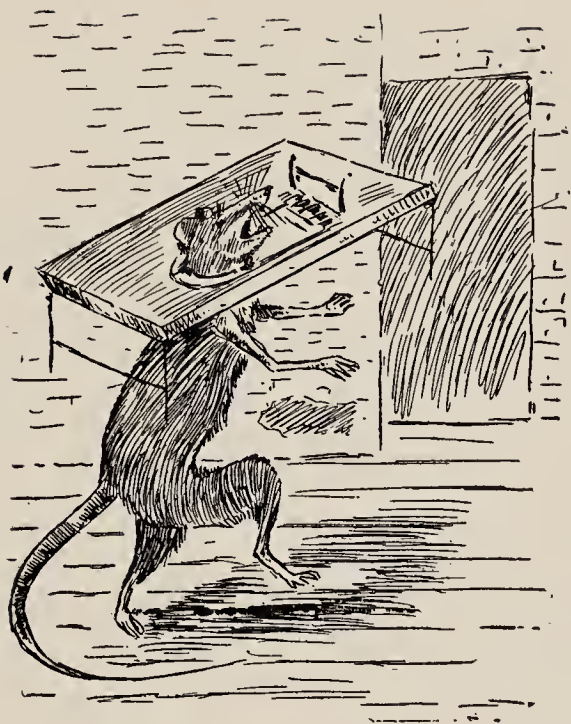
But the swift-footed mouse Fleety, being on the shore, was a witness to this sad event, and uttering a loud cry, ran and told it to the other mice. But when they heard the story of their dear companion's



pitiful end they were filled with anger and ordered their heralds to summon a council at dawn, at the house of Bread-waster, the unhappy father of Crumb-Pilfer, who was floating at the time on his back in the lake, a corpse. These orders the faithful heralds obeyed,

and at early dawn there was a great assemblage of mice in the public square before the house of the bereaved father.⁽²⁾ Then Bread-Waster arose, enraged on account of his loss and spoke thus: “O Friends, although I alone among the mice have suffered many ills from the frogs, yet misfortunes come to all. But I am now the object of pity, having lost three sons. One by a hateful weasel, who surprising him away from his hole, devoured





king of the frogs, destroyed, having lured him into the deep. Come, let us go forth to fight the frogs, having first covered our bodies in strong armor, and so avenge our loss.”

Thus speaking, Bread-Pilfer persuaded them all to be armed, and Mars, who has the care of battles urged them on.

First indeed they placed greaves around their shins, using for this the shells of green

him. The second in turn met his doom through the deceitful arts of man, being caught in their newly discovered wooden engine, called a trap, which destroys the mice. The third was very dear to me and to his devoted mother, him hath Quick-Leaper,

destroyed, having lured him into the deep. Come, let us go forth to fight the frogs, having first covered our bodies in strong armor, and so avenge our loss.”







beans, which they had stolen during the nights, and opening, devoured the sweet meat. And their breast-plates were made of the skin of a weasel, which finding dead, they had skillfully dried and stretched upon reeds. Their shields were round

metal ornaments from lamps, called bosses, and their spears were long bronze needles. But their helmets were the hollow shells of nuts. Thus did the mice arm themselves.⁽³⁾ Now

when the frogs saw these preparations, they came out of the water, and gathering in one place, a council was held. And while they were debating, a herald from the mice, Field-Stalker by name, the son of illustrious Cheese-Gleaner, came to them bear-





ing a staff, and proclaimed the evil news of war. saying: "O frogs, the mice threatening thee, have sent me in their name to declare war against thee, and their reason is, that having beheld in the water, Crumb-Pilfer, whom thy king, Quick-Leaper lured

from the safety of the shore, and deceivingly slew, they demand vengeance. Now, therefore, those of ye who are most valiant, do ye gird on thine armor and prepare for battle." Having thus spoken, he departed, and the mind of the frogs was filled with fear. But noting their alarm, Quick-Leaper arose on his seat and addressed them thus: "O friends, I did not slay the mouse, nor was I near when he died. He must have been suffocated while playing near the marsh, imitating the swimming of one of us. But these





base ones, searching for a victim, blame me who am innocent. Now therefore, let us plan how we may destroy these deceitful mice. And first I will speak that which seems best to me. Having bound on our armor, let us take up our positions where the

bank is the highest, and when they, rushing on to attack us, come near, let us seize them by their helmets, drag them to the edge, and jump into the water with them. But they being unable to swim will drown, and we being victors may erect a trophy over the slain mice."

This speech met with the approval of the frogs, and they armed themselves thus:

The leaves of the marsh mallows they bound on their shins, their breast plates were made from wide, fresh beets, and cabbage leaves their shields,





and in their hands they carried long, sharp reeds, and bulrushes as spears, and light cockle shells their helmets were. And being thus arrayed, they took up their posts on the bank, brandished their spears, shouted their war-cry, and were ready for

battle. These warlike preparations, however, did not escape the eye of Jupiter;⁽⁴⁾ riding in his chariot about the starry heavens, and sending fleet-footed Mercury,⁽⁵⁾ his messenger, he called together all the gods. Now when they were seated in his palace, he pointed out to them the hostile armies, and smiling pleasantly asked the gods, who among them would take sides with the frogs and who with the mice, and turning to Minerva⁽⁶⁾ he said:

“O Daughter, dost thou favor the mice? For they are thy companions







continually in thy temple and feast with delight on the offerings." But him Minerva answered quickly thus:

"O, Father, never will I assist the mice when they are in trouble, for they have done me much wrong, having destroyed my garlands for the wax and emptied my lamps. But the greatest evil I charge them with and which particularly enrages me is, that they have nibbled holes in the delicate web of the garment which I wove in the contest with the rash mortal, Arachne.⁽⁷⁾ But neither will I aid with my might the frogs. For yesterday when I was returned from the battle, tired and sleepy, their awful croakings made my head ache and kept me awake until the cock crowed. Now rather let us avoid their field of battle lest perchance we





be wounded by a sword, spear or flying dart, for they are going to fight hand to hand and even if a god were to come against them they would not retire. But come, let us amuse ourselves by watching them from the clouds."

In the meantime the two armies came near to each other, and took the positions which seemed best to their leaders. And a herald from each side came forth, accompanied by gnats, bearing a large trumpet, and they gave the signal for the onset, which Jupiter seconded by a thunderbolt.

Then first from the army of the frogs came out Blow-Bag, and brandishing his spear above his head challenged the leaders of the mice to single combat. Now Frisky-Legs who led the right of the army of mice,





accepted, but ere he had time to launch his spear Blow-Bag pierced him through the belly, in the middle of the liver, and he fell to the ground, and the earth was wet with his blood. But after him Hole-Sneaker took aim at Slimy-Legs and his strong

spear pierced his breast above the middle and death came upon him. And now the sturdy Green-Back, hearing Slimy-Legs' loud cry, was much angered, and he slew the brave herald of the mice, loud squeaking Field-Stalker, and striking him under the arm his pointed reed pierced the heart. And Bread-Waster, whose heart was mourning for his beloved son Crumb-Pilfer, smote Loud-Talker on the hip and he fell, and darkness came over his eyes. And now the battle became general and the





heroes on both sides performed wondrous deeds, nor did either side show fear. Now when Wet-Marsh saw his brother Loud-Talker perish he came upon Hole-Sneaker from behind and struck him with a millstone on the

neck; but Hole-Sneaker as he fell drove his spear into Snake-Fearer's foot, and they falling together seized hold of one another and the ground was much torn with their struggles. Now Wet-Marsh coming up, was about to put an end to Hole-Sneaker when Strong-Pilcher spying him took aim with his brazen spear; nor did he miss, but smote Wet-Marsh under the ribs and killed him. When Cabbage-Gorger perceived this he grew afraid and started for the edge of the lake in fright but he could not





escape the brave Strong-Pilcher, who threw a large stone upon him, crushing out his life, and staining the marsh with purple gore. Now Quick-Leaper standing on the very edge of the marsh, slew illustrious Cheese-Gleaner; and aged

Scent-Bacon, the father of Steal-Meal, charged upon "Reedy" who, however, plunged into the lake, being overcome with fear, having lost his shield in the fray. But Still-Water did combat with Noble Scent-Bacon, and neither could gain advantage till Still-Water rushing straight on smote Scent-Bacon in the middle of the forehead with a sharp stone, and the brains ran out of his nose, but faultless Water-Splasher slew Cheese-Finder and was in turn killed by valiant Fleety rushing at him with his spear, and darkness veiled his eyes. And





then did Nibble-Garlic catch Smell-Hound by the foot and drag him over the bank, and leaving him to choke in the lake, returning to the fight, Cake-Taster smote him between the shoulders at the neck, and he fell back in the marsh a corpse. At this the youthful Mud-Walker hurled a handful of mud in Cake-Taster's face and was within a little of blinding him, but he became enraged and seizing a large stone in his sturdy hand, from the field where it had been a burden, cast it straight at Mud-Walker, which struck him below the knees and he fell; nor could he rise again because his right shin was broken. But Young-Croaker came to the rescue and went in turn against Cake-Taster and smote him with his two-edged sword in the belly, and as he pulled it out





the entrails followed. And Wheat-Cruncher being wounded in the leg drew back from the strife and hid in a ditch. Then Bread-Pirate smote Quick-Leaper on the foot, causing him great pain and he retreated towards the lake, but Bread-Pirate perceiving his condition ran up to finish him.

Now at this time the valiant Garlic was causing great destruction among the mice by his mighty blows, and there was no one to come against him; he, seeing the danger of his king, Quick-Leaper, came to his aid, and taking aim at Bread-Pirate with a sharp bulrush, struck him in the middle of his shield. The spear did not penetrate, but the point was broken off and he was unarmed. At this the mice took courage and charged upon him in a body, determined to avenge





their dead friend Crumb-Pilfer, on Quick-Leaper. But Garlic quickly caught up the injured king and dived beneath the water with him. Now among the mice was a certain young one, a great hand-to-hand fighter, the son of

blameless Cake-Plotter, a general who displayed courage and skill in battle, and whose name was Biggest-Share, he alone among the mice was surpassing in the fight. And as he stood upon the field surrounded by the dead and dying victims of his prodigious valor, he determined to destroy the whole race of frogs, and would have accomplished this, so great was his valor, had not Jupiter, the father of gods and men, taken pity on the frogs, and addressed the other gods thus:

“O Children, surely it is a great deed we behold; Biggest-Share







astounds me by his valor. But we must aid the frogs or they will be exterminated. Now let us despatch Minerva and Mars, who may stay Biggest-Share from his vengeance.” But Mars⁽⁸⁾ arose and spoke thus:

“Neither the might of Minerva, nor yet that of Mars, will be sufficient to stay the slaughter. But do thou, O Father Jupiter, hurl thy thunderbolt, for that may separate them in fear. And as he spake, the son of Saturn hurled his death-dealing, earth-destroying bolt and thundered greatly, which shook even mighty Olympus,⁽⁹⁾ and terrified all, both the frogs and mice, but Biggest-Share who like unto Ajax defied the lightning, continued to slaughter the frogs. Jupiter enraged at this, sent an army to aid the frogs, and they





came, anvil-backed, curved-clawed, squinting, their mouths armed with pincers, shell-clad, wide-backed, crook-kneed, boney, eight-footed, with eyes in their breasts. Crab was their name; with a side-long gait they came, through a gap in

the ranks of the demoralized frogs and waited not, but going amongst the mice clipped off a leg here, an arm there and again a tail. The mice finding that their spears had no effect on these heavy armored creatures, and seeing their fellows thus mutilated, turned and fled, leaving the crabs alone upon the field.

And the Sun, sinking beneath the horizon, gave the signal of approaching night.

Thus ended the Battle of the Frogs and Mice, brought to pass in one day.





GLOSSARY

- 1 It was the custom among the Ancients when meeting a stranger, to demand of him whence he came, what his object was, and facts as to his nation, family and station. This custom is still in vogue in Asia Minor.
- 2 It was also customary, when any important event occurred in which the populace were interested, for all the inhabitants to assemble in one place and listen to the addresses of their leaders.
- 3 The armor which the Greeks wore consisted of a plumed helmet of metal, a cuirass made of iron plates, or a leather coat of mail laid over with iron scales, metal greaves reaching from the knees to the ankles, and a shield made of ox-hide covered with metal, the shape of which varied from round to oval. Their weapons were swords, battle-axes, clubs studded with metal, long spears, slings and bows.
- 4 Jupiter (Zeus), father of the gods, was the son of Saturn and Rhea, who were of the race of Titans. Through a rebellion in which he led the victors against his father, he assumed the supreme power. Dodona, Crete and Arcadia were the principal places where his worship was cultivated. He was the protector of law and order; the avenger of broken oaths and crimes against morality; he was interested in the political affairs of men and also kept a watchful eye on their private lives. He controlled the thunder and lightning, guided the stars, and

regulated the whole course of nature. He meted out both punishment and reward according to his will, which, however, was often capricious and unjust. The Fates and Destiny alone dared, among the gods, to oppose his will, though Juno at times took advantage of her position as his wife to alter the course of his actions. Jupiter, although a god, was subject to pleasure, pain, grief and anger.

5 Mercury (Hermes) was the son of Jupiter and Maia, goddess of the plains. While yet an infant he showed great intelligence and good judgment. As an instance, he one day stretched strings across a tortoise shell, and, touching them lightly, produced a sweet strain of music thus inventing the lyre. He was god of thieves, but owing to his swiftness of foot was appointed messenger to the other gods. In the pictures and statues of him he is depicted with winged feet and a winged cap. In his hand he bears a wand which, when thrust between two conflicting elements, caused peace to settle on them.

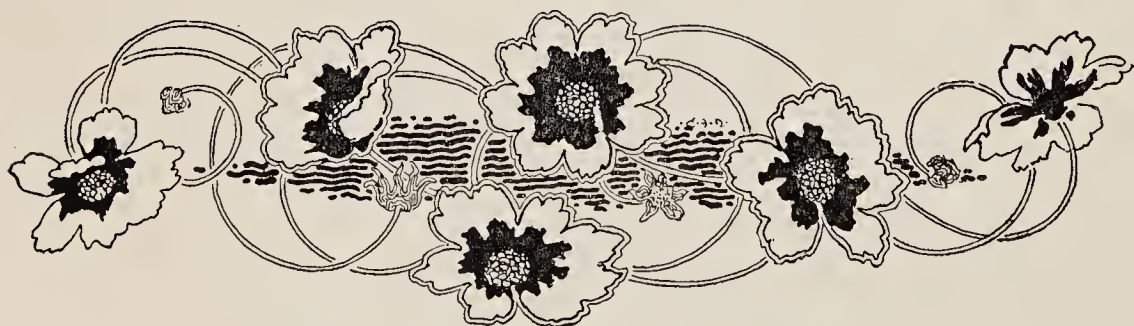
6 Minerva (Athene). The story of her birth is as follows: One day Jupiter, suffering from a severe headache, summoned the other gods to his palace on Mount Olympus, in the hope that they could advise some relief. Their efforts, however, were unsuccessful, even though they had the aid of Apollo. Unable to endure the pain longer, he told Vulcan to take an axe and cleave his head open. Hardly had the axe been withdrawn from his head when out sprang Minerva, with glittering armor and poised spear, singing a song of victory. She having thus joined the circle of the gods, presided over peace, defensive war,

and needlework. She aided the spread of wisdom and the greatest of Greek cities was called Athens in honor of her.

- 7 The story of this contest is as follows: There lived in ancient Greece a beautiful maiden whose name was Arachne. So expert was she with the needle that her work was famous throughout the then known world. When weaving, she was surrounded by a group of attentive on-lookers, and even the Nymphs left their haunts to watch her nimble fingers manipulate the delicate threads. But she had one fault which caused even the mortals to become disgusted with her. And that was her inordinate pride, conceit and boasting. It was said that Minerva was her teacher, but this Arachne haughtily denied, saying that, on the contrary, she could instruct the goddess, and if Minerva wished to match skill with her she would be ready at any moment to pay the penalty if she lost. The goddess, hearing this boast, assumed the form of an old woman and went to Arachne and advised her to retract what she had said, as it was an insult to the divinities for mortals to compare themselves with the gods; but Arachne, turning to the old woman, told her to be gone and give her advice to her servants, adding that she was not afraid of the goddess; even dared her to a trial of skill. At this challenge, Minerva dropped her disguise and stood in front of Arachne in all her godly majesty. All present immediately paid her homage except her challenger, who alone was unawed. They lost no time in beginning the contest. Minerva chose for her subject her contest with Neptune, and Arachne, the kidnapping of Europa. No sooner

was their work completed than Arachne saw she was defeated, and fearing the just wrath of Minerva, hanged herself. Minerva, perceiving her in this position, and about to die, changed her into a spider (which insect is usually seen suspended by a single thread), and condemned her and her descendants to spin and weave for all eternity.

- 8 Mars (Ares), son of Jupiter and Juno, was the god of war, and preferred the din of battle to all other music. No gentle deeds were expected of him; in fact, the ancients trembled with fear at the mere mention of his name. He was generally represented in a suit of armor, a plumed helmet, a long spear, and a round shield. Bellona, goddess of war, usually accompanied him and drove his chariot. They were worshipped together in the same temple and their altar was the only one amongst the Greeks on which human beings were sacrificed.
- 9 Mount Olympus, situated near the boundaries of Thessaly and Macedonia in Greece, on the fortieth north latitude and $22^{\circ} 15'$ east longitude, was supposed to be the chief abode of the gods. The palace of Jupiter was on its summit.



PHILLIPS ACADEMY



3 1867 00076 0111

